

Outlook

The University of Maryland at College Park Faculty and Staff Weekly Newspaper • Volume 10 Number 16 • February 6, 1996

Retention Revisited: Team Develops Action Plan

Like many of its peers, the University of Maryland works hard to attract a diverse, dynamic and academically strong group of students to campus each year. But somewhere between their first exciting days as freshmen and their much-anticipated graduation, many of these same students are packing it in and saying goodbye to College Park.

Despite a popular assumption, the majority of students who leave are not in poor academic standing. Rather, they are students who may be doing quite well.

"Retention is a major issue here," says Bill Spann, director of registrations and records. In fact, he says, not only did President William E. Kirwan significantly address the subject before the College Park Senate a year ago, but also the campus had issued nearly a dozen reports on retention over the past decade.

Trouble is, no one had really acted on any of those reports. "The problem is incredibly complex," says Spann.

Complex and certainly not unique to Maryland. What is unique, however, is the university's approach to righting the retention wrongs.

Last spring a Continuous Quality Improvement team was formed to address retention. Team sponsor was Robert Hampton, associate provost and dean of undergraduate education. Team leader was Spann. Rounding out the group were faculty and associate staff members from all areas of campus as well as one student.

"Based on working with and talking with people on campus," says Spann, "we found several commonly held beliefs about retention." The team listed these beliefs at the outset of the report "to show that the campus attitude about retention was based on myths."

Some of those myths include:

- "Most of the student who leave the university without graduating are in bad academic standing."
- "Our problem is with freshmen, not with upperclassmen."
- "Retention problems can be fixed by changing the quality and quantity of students we admit to the university."
- "Attrition is good for the university. It helps us to focus on the best students who are willing to stick it out. If it weren't for budget problems, there really wouldn't be much need to pay attention to this..."
- "It doesn't really cost much to lose students. There are plenty of student who can take their place."
- "Other schools have to worry more about the costs of financing an education. That really isn't a problem for students attending the University of Maryland."

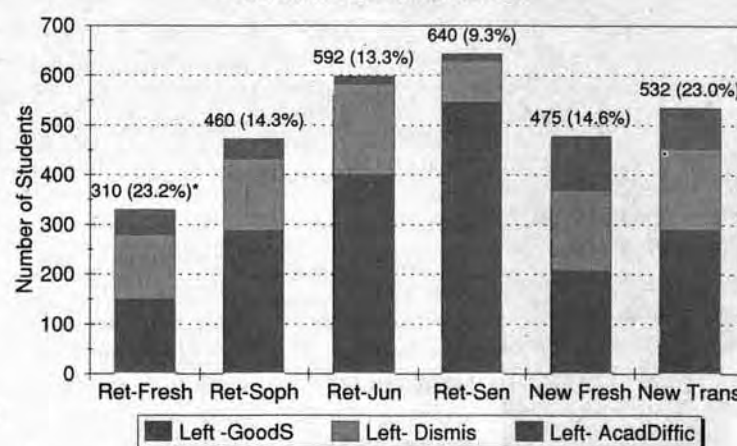
Faced with an uphill battle, the team began to attack the problem head on.

"We capitalized on former studies and retention reports," says team member Vivian Boyd, director of the Counseling Center, noting that "a tremendous amount of effort has gone into studying retention over the past 10 to 15 years." Gathering with the authors of these former reports, the team "quizzed them and attempted to learn from them," Boyd says.

Both Spann and Boyd note that there was eager participation on the part of the former study members. "Many were retirees or others who came back because they still cared about the issue," says Spann.

In addition, the team looked at two major factors used by most campuses: first-year retention and six-year graduation rates. The six-year, as opposed to four-year, graduation rate "reflects a culture in which students change their mind about

Non-Returning Degree Seeking Fall 1993
Students as of Fall 1994



* Percentage of total cohort not returning.

college or are working through college," says Spann.

"When you look at the enrollment status at six years," says Spann, "the second largest population is students leaving school in good standing. The largest population of these are seniors."

What's more, statistics show that the university loses more students in good standing, rather than academic dismissal, says Spann.

In the course of the team's review, one fact became clear: faculty and staff play a significant role in retaining students. Just how significant a role may be lost on many faculty, who for example, may not think about the effect what they say—or don't say—will have on their students.

Keisha Wilson a Banneker Scholar who graduated last May, was the student member on the CQI team. Spann recalls her sharing a very powerful story with the team members.

In Wilson's junior year, she was having difficulty with one of her courses. There were concepts she didn't fully understand. When Wilson went to her professor for help, his first response was, "There's still time to drop this course." Her response? "But, I want to be successful."

"Was it a gender issue, a race issue?" wonders Spann. "No one knows. But the fact is that this faculty member had the power over this student's decision to stay or leave." Perhaps a less determined student might have taken the professor's advice.

"Still time to drop," says Spann, became a phrase for thought throughout the team's work. But it was the well-known African proverb "It takes a village to raise a child," which the team chose as its theme.

"Faculty and staff need to be educated to help retain students," says Spann. "It's important for them to invest and engage."

"Retention is not about lowering academic standards," says Spann. "It's about holding on to them."

The team developed nine problem statements in four broad areas: management, finance, connection/climate and math. "We looked at the problems and key issues and came up with 23 recommendations," says Spann. Hampton, who is determined that the team's work not become yet another report, has created action teams to move on those recommendations.

University Loses Bid to Host Fall 1996 Presidential Debate

Despite an impressive showing, the University of Maryland will not be hosting one of the fall 1996 Presidential debates.

According to Susan Schwab, dean of the School of Public Affairs and a member of the university committee that prepared the bid for the debate, commission members were "extremely impressed with not only the university's facilities and capabilities, but also with the experience and attitudes the university brought to the table—particularly on the technical/logistical front."

Ultimately, says Schwab, as one of several competitive applicants from the East Coast, the university lost the bid solely for reasons of geography.

In late January, the Commission on Presidential Debates officially announced that Washington University in St. Louis (Sept. 25), University of South Florida and the city of St. Petersburg (Oct. 9) and the University of San Diego (Oct. 16) were selected to host the debates. Trinity College and the city of Hartford were selected to host a vice presidential debate on Oct. 2.

Last October, the university was among 10 institutions under consideration as a debate site. In the intervening months, members of the commission visited the campus to tour the facilities and assess all the university had to offer.

In addition to Maryland, South Florida and Trinity, three East Coast schools, Furman University (South Carolina), George Washington University and the University of Pennsylvania were presidential debate contenders. The University of Oklahoma and Michigan State University also submitted bids.

Originally, 40 institutions approached the commission about hosting one of the debates. Some dropped out of their own choosing during the review process. Others were eliminated from consideration for technical reasons by the commission.

Previously, the university hosted a democratic presidential primary debate in 1992 and a Maryland gubernatorial race debate in 1994.

—continued on page 7

Linking the University and State in an Economic Development Partnership

Brian Darmody Takes on New Role as Economic Adviser to Pres. William E. Kirwan

Enhancing the university's role in forging the state's economic future will be challenging, but Brian Darmody is the man for the job.

Pres. William E. Kirwan recently announced that Darmody, his current assistant for legislative affairs, will spend the next year as his senior adviser for economic development.

Working with faculty, staff and administrators across the campus, and with county and state economic development officials, Darmody will develop and implement a plan to increase the university's interaction with the private sector.

"It has become quite apparent that the university cannot rely on just state appropriations," says Darmody. "That's true both here and nationally. The rate of change in the university community is increasing rapidly."

Darmody notes that the Washington—Baltimore corridor and the northern Virginia area is an area of great economic growth and also of great change.

Maryland is the largest research university in the Washington area, and the largest public research university in the state, he adds.

"My new role is a way of helping to ensure that we are given credit and greater coordination of the activities we already do."

Darmody will bring a wealth of experience to the position.

He served for a number of years on the university's in-house counsel office. Shortly thereafter, because he had experience working for the congressman who represented the College Park area and had worked for state delegates in Annapolis, Darmody began to play a larger role in government affairs at the university.

This was before the University of Maryland System was reorganized in 1988. The university was not particularly engaged in outreach activities because of the way it was set up, says Darmody. Most of the outreach activities were administered through the then-central administration office.

He says for a research institution that was as mature as Maryland, we didn't have a substantial presence among our external constituencies—for example, in the legislative and governmental arenas or among business groups.

So he began involving himself more heavily with those external constituencies, chiefly on the governmental side. As a natural result, Darmody began working with a number of private sector groups such as state and local cham-

bers of commerce and other groups who supported higher education.

It became apparent to Darmody that the university had a number of economic development opportunities right on campus. The Engineering Research Center, the College of Business and Management and the College of Education were all involved in their own outreach activities, he says.

Darmody recognized the need for the university to demonstrate, in a more focused and coordinated way, these activities to the business community.

For example, many people don't realize that one of the first uses of large-scale computer networking at other universities took place at College Park, says Darmody.

There was a computer network out there that was primarily a defense network. Glen Rickert, who was head of the computer science center, took it and started linking universities.

That was the first significant non-defense related networking of universities. It was so successful, says Darmody, that the National Science Foundation adopted it as a national network which eventually evolved into

what we call the Internet. This only happened in the late '70s/early '80s.

"When the history of the Internet is written," he adds, "this university and the faculty and the technicians will have played a substantial role. Yet, I don't think most people probably know that."

The university also played a substantial role in the development of lasers and there are other areas of technology that we are involved in, but we don't always get credit for, Darmody adds.

He seems to be skilled at scouting out hidden opportunities. At one point, the university didn't have an office of technology development. Since he was wearing his legal hat, faculty members would approach Darmody, saying they had invented some sort of technology. "But we had a fairly passive approach to patenting and licensing technological innovations of our faculty."

When Darmody learned of someone who was willing to establish and pay for a technology transfer office at the university, he quickly followed up. "I saw a need for some coordination and since the entity was willing to help pay for the creation of this office, it seemed like a good idea."

He spent a lot of time on helping to develop that and as a result, the office of technology liaison was created.

Darmody was also involved in help-

ing the American Center of Physics to relocate adjacent to the College Park/University of Maryland Metro Station. He saw the opportunity to

future may be that with telecommunications and improvements in other technologies, we may not need to have a huge pool of businesses located nearby.

"On the other hand, I think a computer will never substitute for personal interactions. Human interaction will always be important."

Darmody is an alumnus of Maryland, having earned his bachelor's in government and politics here.

He attended law school at

the University of Baltimore.

Darmody welcomes any suggestions or comments about economic development.

He can be reached at 405-1990.

—JANET CHISMAR

"My new role is a way to coordinate and to help ensure that we are given credit for the activities we already do."

—*Brian Darmody,*
adviser for economic development

recruit a substantial professional association to this area that would provide linkages to the university.

Darmody serves as a liaison between the city of College Park and the university. In that role, he has developed a number of relationships with the city. "We try to jointly work on sustaining the economic well being of the area."

"So we had a number of activities at the university imbedded in a number of colleges. I increasingly was working on these activities anyway, so Pres. Kirwan thought it might be useful for me to work for a year exclusively on these sorts of activities—to help bring greater focus and increased recognition for what the university is already doing."

While working as a lawyer, in government affairs, with business entities and with external constituencies, "I developed experience and an interest in this whole area," says Darmody.

"That's why I agreed to take on this role."

Over the next year, he will put together a plan, coordinate and help develop strategies to increase the interaction of the university with the private sector.

"We're not talking necessarily about just increasing sponsored research, but working with a number of external and internal constituencies on the campus and providing a better recognition for some of our activities."

"They say economic development is a contact sport—it's getting out and working with some of those outside groups. That has already borne fruit in some projects that you hear just by chance meetings."

The university is well situated in the Baltimore-Washington corridor, has a large variety of disciplines, and is extremely strong in business, the physical sciences and arts and humanities, says Darmody. And these are some of the areas that are important to economic development.

"The National Research Council just came out with its evaluations of doctoral programs and certainly this university is a leader among all universities in the Washington area and even the state," he adds.

"In the physical sciences, if you look from Philadelphia to Miami, there's no university that's stronger in the computing, math and physical sciences."

"[The job] is helping to illustrate that. You can't just have research and expect economic development. The



Janet Chismar

Brian Darmody will advise Pres. Kirwan on enhancing Maryland's economic visibility.

Notice to Outlook Readers:

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UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND AT COLLEGE PARK

Outlook

Outlook is the weekly faculty-staff newspaper serving the College Park campus community.

Vice President for Institutional Advancement
Reld Crawford

Director of University Relations
Roland King

Editor
Jennifer Hawes

Assistant Editor
Janet Chismar

Layout & Production
Ginger Swiston

Letters to the editor, story suggestions and campus information are welcome. Please submit all material at least two weeks before the Tuesday of publication. Send material to Editor, Outlook, 2101 Turner Building, through campus mail or to University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742. Our telephone number is (301) 405-4629. Electronic mail address is outlook@umdacc.umd.edu. Fax number is (301) 314-9344.

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Greig Stewart Leads Service Learning at the State Level

Drawing on his considerable community service background, Greig Stewart, assistant dean of the College of Journalism, will serve as one of four deans of the Maryland Service Exchange.

The exchange is a statewide, service training network that provides technical assistance and programmatic support for volunteer organizations and service programs.

Stewart was appointed dean of service learning by the Governor's Commission on Service. Other deans will be in charge of community building, research and evaluation, and participant development.

"This is our first year," says Stewart. "We are sort of creating it as we go along with the assistance of the commission—making sure their objectives are being met and creating a lasting network that we leave for the state to support its volunteer efforts."

Maryland is one of the few states that has mandated a service requirement for all graduating high school seniors, says Stewart. "It's one thing to legislate it and it's another thing to implement it."

There is a different state organization—the Maryland Student Service Exchange—that is targeted primarily to the support of high schools and the school districts in accomplishing that effort.

In the larger scheme, says Stewart, all these efforts demonstrate that Maryland is committed to developing an ethic of service throughout the state.

According to Stewart, the commission wanted to establish a type of university or college without walls that would provide technical assistance and advice through faculty. They then wanted to identify deans of those various faculties who would coordinate efforts and serve as contacts for the volunteer organizations, connecting them to the appropriate person/expert to help them with their concern.

They were looking for people who were not only knowledgeable in the field, but also "walking the talk."

And Stewart certainly does.

His interest in community service and volunteerism has been life-long, including a stint as a Peace Corps

volunteer.

Professionally, his interest was sparked while assistant dean for students at Catholic University. There he established a volunteer program in the student affairs division, which got him embedded into the



Greig Stewart was appointed as a dean of the Maryland Service Exchange.

Washington, D.C., network.

Stewart earned his master's degree in counseling and personnel at Maryland and his Ph.D. in student development at American University. He co-authored "Community Service as Values Education" in 1990.

This year marks his 10th anniversary as a facilitator of support groups for persons living with AIDS through the auspices of the Whitman-Walker Clinic.

In addition, Stewart and his partner are being trained to be foster parents in D.C.

As for the commission, "I want to make sure that the goals it has identified are being met. With respect

to being the dean for service learning, there are several philosophical approaches that service learning can take. Some people see it as participatory citizenship, some people see it from a social perspective justice.

"Our focus in our writings and our work with students has been from a social justice perspective which is more than just citizenship," he says.

He says he hopes to provide training and development assistance to the various organizations, to "transfer our concerns about service being more than working in a soup kitchen or participating in a fundraiser to make sure that service is part of enriching our society as a whole."

In that vein, Stewart continues, "we are very much concerned that any kind of service activity coordinated by faculty or teachers takes into account the collaborative nature of that exercise. The site where the service will be provided is as much of a player in the design and implementation and the teaching that goes on as is the faculty or teacher."

Maryland has been a breeding ground for the growth of service learning as a philosophy, a pedagogy and a program, says Stewart. "Barb Jacoby in community service is doing wonderful things in terms of promoting service learning throughout student affairs. [She's] making sure that student affairs does not overlook the commuter who is 80-90 percent of the entire population and honoring commuters' service, be it on campus, or off campus."

Stewart also credits Marilyn Smith who is a recent Ph.D. graduate from the College of Education and the executive director of the Governor's Commission on Service. "She has been very much a mover and a shaker in the state in terms of

attracting grant monies around the issue of service."

Other key players include the Center for Political Leadership and Participation, directed by Georgia Sorenson, which was instrumental in the pilot Americorp program that attracted Pres. Clinton's visit and Suzanne Mintz, coordinator of service learning.

"In many ways," says Stewart, "[Maryland] is a laboratory as well as a model."

—JANET CHISMAR

"In many ways, we are a laboratory as well as a model [of service]."

—Greig Stewart,
New Dean of the
Maryland Service Exchange

Maryland's Version of AAA--without the Wait

Help is as Close as 314-4CAR

After a long day, you finally make it to your car, put the key in the ignition, turn and...NOTHING. Not to worry. If your battery is dead, your keys locked in your car, your tire flat or your gas tank empty, all you have to do is call 314-4CAR for assistance.

This phone number will connect you with the Motor Assistance Vehicle (MAV), a free service provided to students, faculty, staff and visitors by the Department of Campus Parking.

After contacting MAV, the wait for the white Chevy truck is usually 30 minutes maximum, says Raymond Stoner, manager of training, program development and public relations. Without a doubt, says Stoner, "motorists will wait less time than for AAA."

Since MAV's start in September 1994, nearly 3,500 motorists have been helped, according to Samuel Martinez, campus parking's assistant manager for public relations and policy documentation. Student workers are trained to perform a variety of tasks for troubled motorists.

If a vehicle's problem is more serious than MAV can handle they will give as much help as they can, including providing a listing of area service stations which will offer discounts for services, says Stoner.

"A lot of peer institutions offer this service," Stoner says. The Department of Campus Parking felt that it was an essential service to provide to campus motorists.

Some 95 percent of their calls are for jump starts, especially during cold and wet seasons, says Martinez. However, they have found that there are more lockouts during finals week when students are more prone to be forgetful.

In a good month, MAV will help 300 motorists, 250 of whom are students and only 50 of whom are faculty and staff members, says Stoner. He adds that he's not sure if faculty take better care of their cars or don't know about the MAV and its operating hours.

Stoner encourages faculty and staff to utilize MAV's services.

MAV's Spring semester hours, effective from Jan. 29-May 1, are Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Fridays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Winter and Summer break hours are Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Motorists should contact Campus Police at 403-5555 for assistance after these hours.

The MAV unit's area of operation is restricted to the College Park campus including the System Administration Offices, Maryland 4H home offices, the Veterinarian Medicine Building on Metzger Road, Lot 19 on Campus Drive located across from University College and Lot 15 adjacent to the sorority buildings. Their area does not include University College, says Stoner.

Another service offered by the Department of Campus Parking for faculty and staff is the Parking, Information and Transportation (PIT) Crew. This service will provide parking services to support special events sponsored on campus including meetings and conventions. This includes sign packages, as well as parking attendants to distribute parking permits, monitor lots and provide directional information and reserve parking spaces.

To obtain more information about PIT Crew services, contact Martinez at 314-1991 or Joan Lloyd, special projects supervisor, at 314-7198.

—KATIE CASEY

Music department changes its tune

In a decision to reflect the many aspects and large size of the music program, the department of music has changed its name to the School of Music as of December 1995, according to Suzanne Beicken, concert manager of the School of Music. The title School of Music better defines all that the school offers, says Beicken, including performance, academic and theoretical degrees like many peer institutions which are also called schools of music.

Calendar of Events February 6-15

Tuesday, February 6

Art Exhibition: The Seventh Annual Prince George's County Juried Exhibition, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Parents Association Gallery, Stamp Student Union. 4-8493.

Art Exhibit: "Les Jolies Femmes d'Edouard de Beaumont and Recent Acquisitions and Selected Prints from the Permanent Collection," noon-4 p.m., Art Gallery, Art-Sociology Bldg., continues through Mar. 3. 5-2763.

National Archives Film: "We Love You Like a Rock: The Dixie Hummingbirds," 1994, noon, auditorium, Archives at College Park. 301/713-6625.

Department of Meteorology Lecture: "The Impact of Northern Summer Monsoon on Intra-Seasonal Oscillation," Bin Wang, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 3:30 p.m., 2114 Computer Science Building. 5-5392.

Peer Computer Training Workshop: "Internet Technologies," 6-9 p.m., 3330 Computer Science Center. 5-2941.*

CPR Class: learn adult CPR and choking skills, \$10 for students, faculty and staff, must register in advance in Room 2118 of the University Health Center, 6-9:30 p.m., 3100E University Health Center. 4-8132.*

Wednesday, February 7

Art Exhibition: The Seventh Annual Prince George's County Juried Exhibition, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Parents Association Gallery, Stamp Student Union. 4-8493.

Art Exhibit: "Les Jolies Femmes d'Edouard de Beaumont and Recent Acquisitions and Selected Prints from the Permanent Collection," Monday-Friday, noon-9 p.m., Art Gallery, Art-Sociology Bldg., continues through Mar. 3. 5-2763.

Molecular and Cell Biology Graduate Program Spring 1996 Seminar Series: "Calcium Signaling and Transport in Yeast," Kyle Cunningham, department of biology, Johns Hopkins University, noon-1 p.m., 1208 Zoology-Biology. 5-6991.

CRBS Lecture: "Lawful Fictions: Property, Law and the 18th Century English Novel," Martin Kayman, chairman, department of English, University of Coimbra, Portugal, 4-5:30 p.m., 1120 Susquehanna. 5-6830.

Public Forum and Exhibition Reception: "Character Revealed: Social Commentary & Human Narrative in Multiples, from Daumier to Neel," from Les Jolies Femmes d'Edouard de Beaumont and Recent Acquisitions and Selected Prints from the Permanent Collection, 4-6 p.m., Art Gallery, Art-Sociology Bldg. 5-2763.

Peer Computer Training Workshop: "Introduction to Your WAM Account," 6-9 p.m., 3332 Computer Science Center. 5-2941.*

CPR Class: Learn adult CPR and choking skills, \$10 for students, faculty and staff, must register in advance in Room 2118 of the University Health Center, 6-9:30 p.m., 3100E University Health Center. 4-8132.*

Thursday, February 8

Mathematics Lecture: "Computations of Hydrodynamic Free Surface Problems," Bill Szymczak, Naval Surface Warfare Center, 9:30 a.m., 3206 Math Bldg. he public. Free. 5-5108.

Art Exhibition: The Seventh Annual Prince George's County Juried Exhibition, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Parents Association Gallery, Stamp Student Union. 4-8493.

Art Exhibit: "Les Jolies Femmes d'Edouard de Beaumont and Recent Acquisitions and Selected Prints from the Permanent



Muir Brings Beethoven to Maryland

The Muir String Quartet begins a cycle of the complete Beethoven quartets at the Ulrich Recital Hall on Feb. 10 and Feb. 11.

Collection," noon-4 p.m., Art Gallery, Art-Sociology Bldg., continues through Mar. 3. 5-2763.

Department of Meteorology Lecture: "The Madden-Julian Oscillation, Super Cloud Clusters, Twin Cyclone and All That," Winston Chao, NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center, 3:30 p.m., 2114 Computer Science Bldg. 5-5392.

Reliability Seminar: "A Risky Procedure for Generating Reliability Estimates," Franklin R. Nash, AT&T Bell Labs, 5:15-6:15 p.m., 1100 ITV.

Peer Computer Training Workshop: "Introduction to WordPerfect Windows," 6-9 p.m., 3330 Computer Science Center. 5-2941.*

CPR Class: Learn adult CPR and choking skills, \$10 for students, faculty and staff, must register in advance in Room 2118 of the University Health Center, 6-9:30 p.m., 3100E University Health Center. 4-8132.*

Friday, February 9

Art Exhibition: The Seventh Annual Prince George's County Juried Exhibition, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Parents Association Gallery, Stamp Student Union. 4-8493.

Art Exhibit: "Les Jolies Femmes d'Edouard de Beaumont and Recent Acquisitions and Selected Prints from the Permanent Collection," noon-4 p.m., Art Gallery, Art-Sociology Bldg., continues through Mar. 3. 5-2763.

School of Music Event: Guarneri String Quartet Open Rehearsal, 7 p.m., Ulrich Recital Hall. 5-1150.

Saturday, February 10

Art Exhibition: The Seventh Annual Prince George's County Juried Exhibition, noon-5 p.m., Parents Association Gallery, Stamp Student Union. 4-8493.

Art Exhibit: "Les Jolies Femmes d'Edouard de Beaumont and Recent Acquisitions and Selected Prints from the Permanent Collection," 1-5 p.m., Art Gallery, Art-Sociology Bldg., continues through Mar. 3. 5-2763.

Concert Society Event: Muir String Quartet, Beethoven Cycle I, 8 p.m., Ulrich Recital Hall, pre-concert discussion. 403-4240.*

Sunday, February 11

Art Exhibit: "Les Jolies Femmes d'Edouard de Beaumont and Recent Acquisitions and Selected Prints from the Permanent Collection," 1-5 p.m., Art Gallery, Art-Sociology Bldg., continues through Mar. 3. 5-2763.

Concert Society Event: Muir String Quartet, Beethoven Cycle I, 3 p.m., Ulrich Recital Hall, pre-concert discussion. 403-4240.*

Monday, February 12

Art Exhibition: The Seventh Annual Prince George's County Juried Exhibition, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Parents Association Gallery, Stamp Student Union. 4-8493.

Peer Computer Training Workshop: "Introduction to WordPerfect Windows 3.1," 6-9 p.m., 3330 Computer Science Center. 5-2941.*

Tuesday, February 13

Art Exhibition: The Seventh Annual Prince George's County Juried Exhibition, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Parents Association Gallery, Stamp Student Union. 4-8493.

Art Exhibit: "Les Jolies Femmes d'Edouard de Beaumont and Recent Acquisitions and Selected Prints from the Permanent Collection," noon-4 p.m., Art Gallery, Art-Sociology Bldg., continues through Mar. 3. 5-2763.

School of Music Lecture/Event: "The Art Songs of Harry T. Burleigh," with soprano Regina McConnell, pianist Michael Cordovana, and commentary by Doris Evans McGinty, 12:30-2 p.m., Ulrich Recital Hall. 5-5516.

University Health Center Conference: "Get Real! What's Next for Campus Health?" an interactive teleconference featuring Dr. Richard Keeling, 1-3 p.m., 2111 Stamp Student Union. 4-8128.

Dingman Center for Entrepreneurship seminar: "A Team of Champions: Differentiating your Company by Building a Winning Team," 5:45-7 p.m., Pooks Hill Marriott in Bethesda. 5-2151.*

Peer Computer Training Workshop: "Intermediate Unix," 6-9 p.m., 3330 Computer

Science Center. 5-2941.*

CPR Class: Learn adult CPR and choking skills, \$10 for students, faculty and staff, must register in advance in Room 2118 of the University Health Center, 6-9:30 p.m., 3100E University Health Center. 4-8132.*

Wednesday, February 14

Art Exhibition: The Seventh Annual Prince George's County Juried Exhibition, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Parents Association Gallery, Stamp Student Union. 4-8493.

National Archives Black History Month Film Series: "A Great Day in Harlem," documentary about jazz greats Dizzy Gillespie, Art Blakey, Sonny Rollins and others, 60 minutes, noon, auditorium, College Park Archives. (301) 713-6625.

Art Exhibit: "Les Jolies Femmes d'Edouard de Beaumont and Recent Acquisitions and Selected Prints from the Permanent Collection," noon-9 p.m., Art Gallery, Art-Sociology Bldg., continues through Mar. 3. 5-2763.

CPR Class: Learn adult CPR and choking skills, \$10 for students, faculty and staff, must register in advance in Room 2118 of the University Health Center, 6-9:30 p.m., 3100E University Health Center. 4-8132.*

Thursday, February 15

Mathematics Department Lecture: "Models, Algorithms and Computations for Superconductivity," Qiang Du, Michigan State University, 9:30 a.m., 3206 Math Bldg. 5-5108.

Art Exhibition: The Seventh Annual Prince George's County Juried Exhibition, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Parents Association Gallery, Stamp Student Union. 4-8493.

National Archives Black History Month Lecture: "Traditions of Creativity, Legacies of Culture: Three Case Studies," Richlyn Goddard (African Americans and Atlantic City, NJ, entertainment history), Tamara Brown (dance during the Harlem Renaissance) and Lisa Davenport (European and American reactions to jazz in the 1920s), Howard University, noon, Lecture Room A, Archives at College Park. (301) 713-6625.

Art Exhibit: "Les Jolies Femmes d'Edouard de Beaumont and Recent Acquisitions and Selected Prints from the Permanent Collection," noon-4 p.m., Art Gallery, Art-Sociology Bldg., continues through Mar. 3. 5-2763.

Department of Meteorology Seminar: "The Role of Inertial Instability in Determining Location of Near Equatorial Convection," Peter Webster, 3:30 p.m., 2114 Computer and Space Sciences Bldg. 5-5392.

Reliability Seminar: "Performance and Reliability of Surgical Implants," Manny Horowitz, Johns Hopkins University, 5:15-6:15 p.m., 1100 ITV.

Peer Computer Training Workshop: "Introduction to HTML," 6-9 p.m., 3330 Computer Science Center. 5-2941.*

CPR Class: Learn adult CPR and choking skills, \$10 for students, faculty and staff, must register in advance in Room 2118 of the University Health Center, 6-9:30 p.m., 3100E University Health Center. 4-8132.*

Calendar Guide

Calendar phone numbers listed as 4-xxxx or 5-xxxx stand for the prefix 314- or 405- respectively. Events are free and open to the public unless noted by an asterisk (*) For more information, call 314-8512.

Listings highlighted in color have been designated as Diversity Year events by the Diversity Initiative Committee.

Soprano Regina McConnell Performs Art Songs from her New CD

On Tuesday, Feb. 13, from 12:30 to 2 p.m., soprano Regina McConnell, a lecturer in the School of Music, and pianist Michael Cordovana will perform the "The Art Songs of Harry Burleigh" in Ulrich Recital Hall of the Tawes Fine Arts Building. The lecture recital will include selections from McConnell and Cordovana's newly released recording of the same name on the Centaur label. Doris Evans McGinty will provide the commentary.

Harry Burleigh has probably most been remembered for his numerous and highly successful arrangements of the African-American spiritual, especially the settings for solo voice that made the spiritual available to concert artists for the first time.

But, according to McConnell, Burleigh was also a prolific art song composer, having penned more than 100 during the course of his career. He is becoming the first recognized African-American composer in this genre. McConnell says she felt the need to generate an interest in this neglected side of Burleigh's talent.

Despite Burleigh's genuine interest in the spiritual and his conviction of its importance, he hoped to be remembered as a composer of art songs rather than as

an arranger of spirituals, says his biographer Ann Simpson.

In McConnell's quest to locate Burleigh's songs, she found resources at the Moorland-

Spingarn Research Center, the Library of Congress and the Center for Black Music Research in Washington, D.C. A native of Norfolk, Va., McConnell is a soprano who has achieved critical acclaim throughout the eastern United States and Europe. She began her undergraduate musical training at the Baldwin Wallace Conservatory of Music in Berea, Ohio, and received her bachelor of music in voice from the University of Maryland. McConnell later earned her master's degree in voice from Catholic



Regina McConnell

University.

She has brought home many awards, including the Great Lakes Metropolitan Opera Regional Auditions,

the Marian Anderson award and the Center for Contemporary Opera Award.

McConnell has performed extensively in opera, recital and oratorio. She has been a frequent soloist at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, most notably as soloist in Handel's "Messiah" with the National Symphony Orchestra.

She has appeared on a number of significant American Concert Series, including those at the National Gallery of Art, The Phillips Collection, The Pan American Union and the Chrysler Museum. In addition, she has numerous radio and television broadcast performances to her credit.

McConnell's operatic careers includes roles with the Lake Erie Opera Theatre, the Annapolis Opera, the Washington Civic Opera, the Summer Opera Theatre of Washington and a performance with the National Opera Orchestra Workshop with Eve Queler conducting. She sang the role of Serena in the American and European tour of the Sherwin Goldman landmark production of "Porgy and Bess" at Radio City Music Hall in New York City.

Her European engagements have included performances at the Vatican in Rome as soloist in Samuel Barber's "Knoxville Summer of 1915" with the orchestra of her alma mater, Catholic University. Other appearances include the Teatra Vittoria Emanuele in Messina, Italy; the Deutsches Theatre in Munich; and the Teatro Massimo in Palermo, Sicily.

Admission to the lecture recital is free. For more information, please call 405-5516.

—JANET CHISMAR

A Future Place for the Arts and Humanities Addressed

Laura Struminger Schor, provost and vice president for academic affairs and professor of history at Hunter College of the City University of New York, will deliver the public lecture "The Character of Our Future: A Place for the Arts and Humanities" in conjunction with the Art Gallery's concurrent exhibitions, "Les Jolies Femmes d'Edouard de Beaumont" and "Recent Acquisitions and Selected Prints from the Permanent Collection." The lecture will be in room 2309 of the Art-Sociology Building on Wednesday, Feb. 7 at 6 p.m., directly following the exhibition reception from 5-6 p.m.

Schor curated the Jolies Femmes exhibition of the 19th century lithographs, on view at The Art Gallery through March 3, which humorously and poignantly depict gender roles in French society at that time. She has held the position of full profes-

sor of history at the University of Cincinnati and at Hunter College since 1983. A widely published scholar and teacher, with special expertise on the age of revolution in Europe, 1815-1870, and on women's economic and political status in France, England and in the United States, Schor is also distinguished in higher education leadership and administration, and as an advocate for women's studies. At Hunter, Schor has expanded course offerings in woman's studies from 45 courses to 72 since 1989. With three books on gender roles, class and education in 9th century France to her credit, Schor's most recent research interests are focused on the tumultuous period around 1848 in France and on the political satire of that era. Hunter College's collection of Jolies Femmes lithographs by Edouard de Beaumont were acquired under Schor's auspices, through the provost's discretionary fund.

Views of the Days at McKeldin Library

A new exhibit at McKeldin Library features one of the little-known treasures in the special collections at the University of Maryland—the Baltimore News American Photograph Collection. This priceless collection documents 20th century life and history in Baltimore, the State of Maryland and the nation.

In 1986 more than 1.5 million photographs were donated to the university by the Hearst Corporation after the Baltimore News American closed its doors on a 213-year newspaper publishing tradition. The collection is part of the "morgue" which all major daily newspapers maintain as a journalistic reference collection.

The exhibit, titled "Views of the Days: The Baltimore News American Photograph Collection," depicts some of the diversity of images in the photo archives of the newspaper, ranging from sports and politics to international war and everyday life

in Baltimore. Among the photos in the exhibit is a rarely-seen image of a young Babe Ruth tending bar in his father's Baltimore saloon in the early 1920s. There also are views of architectural landmarks such as the Bromo-Seltzer Tower before 1930 when it was crowned by a 51-foot, 17-ton revolving Bromo-Seltzer bottle.

"Views of the Day," on display through the spring of 1996, is located on the third floor of McKeldin

Library in both the Maryland Room and the Katherine Anne Porter Room. The Maryland Room is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the Katherine Anne Porter Room on Mondays and Thursdays from 1 to 4:30 p.m. For further details, call the Marylandia & Rare Books Department at 405-9212.



Baseball great Babe Ruth, pictured third from the left, was a hero to Yankees and other baseball fans alike. Here, he's captured trying his hand at tending bar in his father's saloon.



Baltimore's Bromo-Seltzer tower.

Environmental Safety Department Protects Campus from Hazard

Behind the campus gates, it's easy to take safety for granted. Hazards which could result in death, injury or illness, or destruction of university property don't haunt the everyday thoughts of most of the campus population. Thankfully, these issues are of major concern to one department.

The department of environmental safety (DES) assists faculty, staff and students in protecting the environment, preserving the health and safety of the campus community, and preventing damage to or destruction of campus resources.

DES identifies and assesses hazards, evaluates risks involved and recommends appropriate action to ensure safe conditions and achieve regulatory compliance.

All this is accomplished for one reason: to keep us safe. Focusing on campus customers is a priority, says Bob Ryan, assistant director of DES.

According to director Leon Igras, DES staff are available as consultants to the rest of campus. His department doesn't have enough people to be in every building all the time to look for hazards. Instead, they want to get everyone involved.

The university community needs to assume responsibility, says Ryan. "We're trying to build a cooperative network."

DES is currently working with the administration to develop an environmental policy statement which commits faculty and staff to complying with all environmental health and safety regulations.

Educating the public is a large chunk of what DES does on a daily basis. Technical groups present education and training programs to faculty, staff and students to achieve compliance with regulatory requirements or to enhance campus safety.

They offer the following programs regularly: asbestos awareness, driver safety awareness, "Fire on Campus" fire safety, respirator use training, basic radiation protection and control, right-to-know/hazard communication and safety workshops for laboratory staff.

Public education and training coordinator Stacey Spinella puts together a schedule for each semester so that any interested department can sign up. She will also occasionally run special sessions for a department.

Some of the training programs are required, depending on the type of work a department engages in. There is also a catalog of materials available to campus, including videotapes and pamphlets, that departments can use internally for their own safety training.

DES is actually divided into a number of subdivisions that offer a vast array of services to the campus.

- Accident investigation checks out all incidents resulting in injury to campus citizens or visitors, or damage to campus facilities. Data resulting from accident assessments are used to develop preventative programs and support university and individual insurance claims.

- The biological safety officer works with faculty to provide compliance with regulations regarding research with microorganisms and DNA molecules.

- Environmental protection staff work with campus facilities managers to assess storm water drainage, underground storage tank integrity, ground water quality and clean air emissions.

- The fire protection program strives to minimize property loss from fires. Fire risks are managed by providing information to the campus community, and by surveying facilities for fire safety and testing fire protection systems.

- Hazardous waste staff are responsible for developing and implementing programs for management of waste such as chemicals, radioactive materials and special medical wastes.

DES operates a permitted hazardous waste storage facility where these chemical, radioactive and special medical wastes are segregated and stored. Afterwards, they are shipped by a hazardous waste contractor to various EPA permitted treatment or disposal facilities.

- The industrial hygiene program is concerned with the recognition, evaluation and control of occupational disease and injury caused by chemical, biological or physical hazards at university facilities.

Duties in the industrial hygiene program include the review of safety protocols and procedures for campus research, ergonomic evaluations, lead control and

personal exposure monitoring for hazardous substances.

- DES also investigates and processes insurance and tort claims. Reports of bodily injury and property damage are documented for the state treasurer's office and the university legal office.

- The occupational safety program is primarily concerned with prevention of accidents caused by physical hazards. Staff survey work areas and construction sites, investigate complaints and accidents, and protect campus personnel from hazardous conditions related to walking/working surfaces, machinery, power tools, welding and electrical equipment.

- Radiation safety staff monitor activities where radioactive materials and radiation-producing devices are used in order to protect the university population and surrounding communities from potential hazards.

DES evolved from a merging of programs. Resident life, physical plant and the radiation safety office merged into the department of public safety in the early '70s. The public safety department then split into two parts: university police and environmental safety.

Some of the issues DES handles, such as indoor air quality, are combined efforts between environmental safety, the health center and physical plant. The departments jointly assess such problems and come up with solutions.

Safety committees, made up of faculty and staff, work with DES to develop campus policies and procedures. These committees include radiation safety, biological and chemical hygiene, indoor air quality, risk management and the traffic accident review board.

Charles Sturtz, vice president for administrative affairs, and Sylvia Stewart, associate vice president for administrative affairs, oversee DES.

Igras says he wants to stress that "DES wants to partner with faculty and staff in a close relationship. We're not police, we're not in the regulatory mode here. We're more in the helpful assistants mode."

—JANET CHISMAR



A New Name for a Familiar Place

Campus Guest Services Becomes Conference and Visitor Services

The department formerly known as Campus Guest Services has changed its name to Conference and Visitor Services (CVS). The new name is more descriptive of the office's function according to Patrick Perfetto, department director.

Conference and Visitor Services works to provide assistance to faculty, staff and others who wish to host a meeting, conference, seminar or special event and to assure that all visitors to the university have a pleasant and trouble-free experience on campus, says Perfetto.

The name-change comes as the department celebrates its 10th year. "We have been careful to keep both names through this year," says Perfetto, noting that both Campus Guest Services and Conference and Visitor Services are listed in the 1996 faculty and staff directory. Despite the potential confusion, "people are catching on," he says.

The new name better states what the department does. Under the Campus Guest Services title, Perfetto found he often had to explain the services the department provided. Perfetto says that he also wanted to recognize that the department's work was similar to that of the convention and visitor bureaus in many cities.

Perfetto says he hopes the new name change will help more faculty and staff remember the function of CVS and allow his office to help organize more faculty and staff conferences on campus. Anticipating growth, they have hired a new assistant director, Gale Quilter.

CVS works as a broker of services from other departments and uses facilities all over campus, says

Perfetto. Faculty or staff members with a conference to organize consult with CVS to make the conference happen. In turn, CVS arranges everything from the registration, to the site management, to the housing reservations. The cost of the conference is built into the registration fee the conference participants pay.

"We are here to provide services when faculty and staff need them and to serve the university community," says Perfetto. CVS receives the majority of its business from campus offices, including events such as Family Weekend which 3,000 parents and family members attended. CVS also orchestrates National History Day in the beginning of June, welcoming 1,300 elementary, middle and high school students to campus.

The office has continued to grow since its start in 1985. Campus Guest Services began as a cooperative agreement among the departments of dining services, resident life and the Stamp Student Union. Over the years the responsibilities of CVS have grown to include the Visitors Center and Memorial Chapel as well.

CVS organizes 70 to 80 conferences per year serving 20,000 to 30,000 conference guests, hosts 180 weddings at the chapel welcoming 25,000 wedding guests, and greets 60 visitors at the Visitors Center daily, says Perfetto.

Conference and Visitor Services is located in Room 0101 Annapolis Hall. For more information about their services, please call 314-7884.

—KATIE CASEY



The staff of the newly renamed Conference and Visitor Services are, standing, left to right, Catalina Toala, Jennifer Moore, Lisa Press and Susan Warren. Sitting are Patrick Perfetto, Gale Quilter, Joy Newheart, Nick Kovalakides and Kristen Calder-Bowman.

Resident Life Introduces Faculty Forum

Interested in spending time with students and enjoying dessert as well? All during the time that you have normally set aside for lunch or dinner?

Many faculty would be interested in spending more time with students if it were more convenient, comfortable and did not take up a lot of time out of their day. To accommodate these concerns, the department of Resident Life is initiating a Faculty Forum Series this semester. The series, modeled on programs at numerous living learning centers and residential colleges at institutions such as Indiana University and Cornell University, is an opportunity for faculty to informally discuss a topic with up to 10 students.

Two faculty members will be invited to introduce a topic of their choice to discuss over a lunch or dinner within the university's dining facilities. Resident Life will provide assistance with the logistics: invitations, location and dates, as well as dessert for the group. The department also will purchase the meal for the faculty participants.

Resident Life hopes this will be an enjoyable and easy way to spend time with resident students, share an interesting perspective on a current topic, and participate in an informal discussion as well.

If you are interested in the program, please call Scott Brown at 314-7608.

Retention Revisited: An Action Plan

continued from page 1

With regard to management, the team felt the need for development of retention goals and philosophy. In the past, retention approaches have been reactive; based on fiscal difficulties, budget cuts and mission confusion. Academic policies, the team noted, are developed without regard for retention.

Goal setting and accountability are two areas on which the team would like to see the various colleges and departments focusing.

As more and more students are forced to rely on student loans and jobs to pay their way through school, financing is a key issue in the retention field.

Jim Christensen, associate director of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and a member of the CQI team, says that "among the items cropping up again and again was the difficulty students have in paying for their education." The average gap between what the student and parent can provide, combined with financial aid, he says, is \$7,000.

Christensen is now heading the finance action team which is slated to meet this week. The first agenda item, he says, will be informing parents of the cause and effect, the pitfalls and burdens of having a job. "I want this committee to help parents understand their options and the consequences of their options."

Christensen notes that many students work too many hours and commute too far to their jobs. "Part of it is the naivete—they don't realize the toll the long commute and job have on their academics," he says. "We need to match students to employment that's closer by."

Also in the works is the development of a module for an EDCP 108 course on paying for college. The course would "school students in the dangers of long-distance commuting and long hours."

Another action committee is looking at the area of connection/climate. The CQI team felt that faculty and staff do not recognize their individual power and role in influencing a student to stay or leave. They regard students as "free goods," that are easily replaced. Toward this end there are plans to develop a video that informs faculty of their effect on retention. A second goal is the development of a faculty awareness program.

"Students need to feel they belong here," says Boyd, and that needs to

come from faculty. A pat on the backs of students, she says, goes a long way.

The team also supported construction of "a customized, comprehensive safety net, in the form of a personal planner and success profile." Such a safety net would send warning signals, beyond academic ones, that students are disengaging from the university.

Katherine Beardsley, assistant dean of the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences and another CQI team member, says these "safety nets" are crucial. Retention safety nets that are currently proving effective include the College Park Scholars program, the Honors program and EDCP 108 courses. "We need to get 100 percent of our students into these types of safety nets," she says.

Beardsley is a proponent of looking at the priorities in each college and department's advising program to see "who we advise and what services we can provide."

A real eye-opener, says Beardsley, is that the team's work "taught me that we have to look at the moral issues. Sometimes what is best for students is leaving the institution." Here, she recommends the Stepping Out Program in which students who need to leave, for financial or other reasons, are kept in a database. Instead of withdrawing, they remain connected to the university, she says.

Difficulties in math, says Boyd, are a major factor in the attrition rate of students. "The common assumption is that the singular problem is students aren't prepared," she says. But the root causes, she says, are many, including math anxiety, motivation, lack of preparation, the recency of math training, math phobia and ineffective study skills.

This campus, says Boyd, had several successful programs in place such as a revamped math placement assessment, math professor Jay Alexander's work with high school students to determine their preparedness for college-level math, and Elizabeth Shearn's highly successful program that helps students overcome math anxiety. Shearn also has developed a computerized approach to math that empowers students, says Boyd.

Like other team members, Boyd believes faculty are "tied into this retention problem. They play the role of primary referral to get help for these kids."

—JENNIFER HAWES

Action Team Facilitators: The Unsung Heroes of the CQI Story

One change resulting from the university's ongoing Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) journey has been the regular creation of small, focused, time-bound action teams. Some teams focus on solving problems while others focus on identifying key gaps in how a unit could perform.

Many of these teams have been utilizing a facilitator to more efficiently accomplish their mission. The role of the facilitator on a team is very unique and often misunderstood. They are often the unsung heroes of the story.

The Office for Continuous Quality Improvement (OCQI) often gets asked "Where can I get a facilitator for my team?" or "We don't really need a facilitator do we? Isn't it the job of the team leader to keep the group on track?" These questions are understandable when viewed from the committee point of view, but a team is slightly different and has different needs.

The Team Leader's job is to coordinate and chair meetings (including to ensure that all members participate fully), follow up with absent members and on action items, appoint rotating tasks within the team, report team progress to the sponsor, and work with the facilitator to plan meeting agendas.

The Team Facilitator has a less obvious role. He or she works with the leader on agendas, cues the leader on process problems, proposes interventions to ensure full participation, coaches the team on the use of CQI tools and techniques, and stays neutral in team discussions. The facilitator's role is one of the most obvious differences between CQI teams and standard committees. By having someone trained to watch group interactions and processes, it is possible for a team to get back on task without ever realizing that they were getting off track.

Danuta Nitecki, associate director of public services with the University Libraries, has placed facilitators in several groups that she has sponsored in the Libraries. Nitecki notes that "my experience has been that the facilitators truly help the team work together better and develop strong support for the final conclusions."

Diane Ensor (Resident Life), who has facilitated groups of MBA project teams, adds "the facilitator can make a big difference when a group gets stuck or overheated on some emotional issue."

As the team becomes more comfortable with the CQI style of meetings and more familiar with the tools and techniques, the role of the facilitator is necessarily reduced. However, the facilitator is not eliminated. As the team approaches the end of the time span of the project, the pressures of trying to fulfill the team mission can negatively affect team morale, interactions, and progress. The facilitator helps keep the team focused on tasks and smoothes over any interpersonal difficulties.

Where does a facilitator come from? Usually, the facilitator is someone who is trained to deal with interpersonal relations and conflicts. To assure neutrality, facilitators often work in an area of the university unrelated to the team's key issues and concerns. They also need to have a strong base in CQI or at least a firm understanding of the underlying principles. The final requirement is an appropriate temperament. As the facilitator's role changes, he or she will take an increasingly less prominent role. Thus, facilitators must be able to put aside their own personal interests and "ego" needs.

Part of the facilitator's role is to help the team look at problems and issues differently. The facilitator must keep the team focusing on a small set of key issues and root causes, emphasize the improvement of systems, not individuals and prevent the group from isolating itself from those who are directly influenced by a problem or solution.

To help keep an open perspective, OCQI organizes facilitator meetings to exchange ideas and learn new techniques. Facilitators on related projects often meet regularly to improve communication between the teams, team leaders, and team sponsors.

The OCQI's mission encompasses training and supporting a pool of facilitator candidates. Geno Schnell, associate director of CQI, notes that "we've been working individually to provide on-the-job training to facilitators, but now we know enough about how this works to offer a course for a group of faculty and staff."

Schnell envisions that facilitators could be used for more than just CQI teams. They can also help with conferences, large group discussions, faculty and staff meetings, retreats, search committees and training workshops.

Students, says Schnell, could also be trained as facilitators. The skills the students would gain could in turn increase the effectiveness of group course projects and student organizations with which the students are involved.

Faculty and staff interested in a better explanation of facilitators, facilitating, or interested in becoming a facilitator can email Schnell at eschnell@umdacc.umd.edu or call the Office of Continuous Quality Improvement at 405-3866.

Continuous Quality Improvement

The Heart and Soul of the Maryland Gospel Choir

It radiates from her face and trembles in her voice: Valeria Foster genuinely loves the Maryland Gospel Choir.

"I can't say enough about the spirit they have," says Foster, who has directed the group for 25 years. "I think when people experience their performances, they can see in their singing the love and the feeling the members have. That's what makes the performances."

The driving force is Foster herself, whose gentle guidance generates an atmosphere of caring and consideration.

At the end of rehearsal, members share their personal concerns with each other. If someone is going through difficulty with their studies, tutors within the choir can help with different subjects. "I try to get them to set their priorities," Foster says.

The campus is so large, she adds, that many students feel they are simply a social security number. "To come where people learn your name and ask where you've been if you've missed a week, or where you can just say 'I'm going through some problems'—it makes a difference.

"They really are a caring group of young people," Foster beams. The choir regularly engages in community service projects such as tutoring in middle schools or singing at area nursing homes. They had an orphanage day when choir members acted as big sisters and brothers.

"The projects help them to act out what they sing about, which is caring for other people and really making the world a better place," Foster says. "The music is great, but the fact that you get along and you fellowship with one another adds that special touch to the music and that's what makes them so special."

Gospel musicians can and should bring their life stories to what they are singing, she says. "You can teach the notes, but what makes the music come alive is the adding of our experiences."

Music seemed to be a natural vocational choice for Foster who started taking piano lessons when she was five years old. But when she got to high school, Foster

chose to major in laboratory techniques because her parents wanted her to study something serious.

"Then I realized that whether it was financially beneficial or not, music really was my calling," she adds.

Her first association with the campus was through the University Chorus. Foster sang under Paul Traver. Later, George Shirley, who was a voice instructor here, recommended her for the Maryland Gospel Choir.

She started as director on Jan. 15, 1981, while teaching high school music in Columbia. At the same time, she discovered a second talent when she began studying computer programming, juggling all three roles at once.

Foster left teaching in the mid-'80s to work in the computer center at Georgetown University. She has also worked in Trinity College's computer center and taught computer science to continuing education students at both institutions. She now works for Computer Technology Services in Rockville as a training specialist.

Initially, directing the choir wasn't easy. Foster started in the middle of the school year. "So when the students came back after break, all of a sudden they had this female. In the music field, as in the culinary field, when we are in elementary or middle school, many of our music teachers are female. But as we go higher up, it becomes more male."

So it was a transitional stage, Foster adds. The group had not sung spirituals before; they had primarily been a gospel music choir. There was music written

by black composers in the 16th and 17th centuries, musicians whose work was similar to Hayden's, that she wanted the choir to learn. "The music that is indigenous to America, the jazz, the gospel that really came from this country—I tried to touch on those kinds of things."

She says she's more a director than pianist, playing mainly to teach members the parts: "My forte is directing and singing."

And reaching out to others.

Foster has taken courses in sign language at Gallaudet University and taught some members of the choir to sign during their performances. Her interest was piqued at her church, which is the oldest black church community for the hearing impaired. She says she learned sign language partly because of the mission she saw there "I can envision myself wanting to be an interpreter at some point for the church service or at least for some of the songs."

For the first time, Foster herself will be presented in recital at the university's Artists Scholarship Benefit Series on April 19 in Ulrich Recital Hall. She says she's not sure there has ever been a choir director presented in a vocal concert before, especially in the gospel music genre. "I'm looking forward to that with anticipation."

As for the Maryland Gospel Choir, they will be performing on Feb. 17 at Memorial Chapel for Black History Month. They will also be in concert with the Washington, D.C., Boys Choir on Feb. 24 in the Colony Ballroom of Stamp Student Union.

—JANET CHISMAR



Valeria Foster directs the Maryland Gospel Choir.

For Your Interest

Sunday Jazz

On Sunday, Feb. 18 at 11 a.m., the University of Maryland Jazz Ensemble, directed by Chris Vadala, will perform a free, short concert as participants in the East Coast Jazz Festival at the Washingtonian Center of the Gaithersburg Marriott. The program will feature the music of Dizzy Gillespie, George Gershwin, Frank Mantooth, Thad Jones, Sonny Rollins and others.

Learning at Your Leisure

Spring art and leisure classes begin Feb. 12 at the Art & Learning Center. Non-credit courses are designed for children, teens, adults and senior citizens. Areas of instruction include painting, drawing, printmaking, photography, pottery, ballroom dancing, t'ai chi chu'an, yoga, massage therapy, self defense for women and more. A discount is offered for campus affiliation and early registration.

For more information, please call 314-2878, or access the center online at http://www.inform.umd.edu/Student/Campus_Activities/Arts/Art_Center.

Challenges and Opportunities

The 22nd annual Maryland Student Affairs conference takes place on

Friday, Feb. 9 in Room 2108 Mitchell Building. Themed "The Changing Face of Student Affairs: Today's Challenges, Tomorrow's Opportunities," the day-long conference features keynote speakers Rev. Peter Gomes, head chaplain, Memorial Church, Harvard University and Margaret Barr, vice president for student affairs, Northwestern University.

Topics covered in various sessions include Women Leading the Profession; Changing Voices in Student Affairs; Staff Development: Challenges, Priorities and Opportunities; Caring for Others and Managing a Career; and The Changing Face of Technology.

Registrations are still being accepted. For more information, call Julie Field, conference chair, at 314-7484.

College Climate Influence

On Tuesday, Feb. 13, Oklahoma State University will present the interactive teleconference, "Get Real! What's Next for Campus Health?" featuring Dr. Richard Keeling. The program will air locally from 1-3 p.m. in Room 2111 Stamp Student Union.

Join Keeling and teleconference participants from more than 60 schools across the United States and Canada in this timely discussion on

the influence of the campus climate on college student health.

All interested students, faculty and staff are invited to attend. For more information, call 314-8128.

Diversity in the Post-O.J. Era

The focus of this year's Diversity Research Forum (March 28) is on diversity in the post-O.J. Simpson and Nicole Brown Simpson era.

In the wake of the famed trial, the Faculty Relations Committee and the College of Arts and Humanities, sponsors of the program, would like to explore issues such as domestic violence, difference in public opinion perception, status of Black men and White backlash.

A two-page abstract of the proposed 20-minute presentation accompanied by supporting visual or audio material should be submitted by Feb. 15 to: Martha Watson, associate dean, College of Arts and Humanities, Francis Scott Key. Participants will be contacted by March 7.

Questions should be directed to Watson at the above address or at mwatson@deans.umd.edu.

Outstanding Commuters

The Office of Commuter Affairs announces the 1996 Michelle Y.

Angyelo Award for Outstanding Service to Commuter Students. The award recognizes an undergraduate or graduate student who has contributed to the quality of life for commuter students during the academic year.

Keeping in mind that many commuter students are juggling jobs, families, school and other activities, the "contributions" on which this award is based may take many forms.

Nominations and applications are being accepted through Friday, Feb. 16 at the Office of Commuter Affairs, 1195 Stamp Student Union. Contact Marcee Turner at 314-7250 for details.

Seeking Prestigious Members

Omicron Delta Kappa, one of the most prestigious national societies, is looking for a few more leaders to honor in the areas of scholarship, campus or community service, athletics, journalism, and the creative and performing arts.

Finding eligible and deserving students requires the help of faculty and staff.

Applications, which are due no later than Thursday, Feb. 15, can be picked up in the Office of the Vice President for Students Affairs, 2108 Mitchell Bldg.